

STOP PRESS

MST204 SP1 1998

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MST204 MATHEMATICAL MODELS AND METHODS

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the course! The purpose of this Stop Press is to keep you in touch with news affecting your study plans, assignment questions, etc.

Please read it carefully as it contains useful information. In particular paragraph 2 contains important information about the effect of the withdrawal of computer terminals from study centres on course materials, paragraph 4 contains important advice about the preparatory work and the submission of TMA01 Part I and paragraph 6 lists parts of the course which will not be assessed in the examination.

Should an error in the assignment material come to light we shall take one of the following lines of action:

1. Put it in the regular STOP PRESS if this is possible. If not then we shall either,
2. inform Staff-Tutors at the Regional Offices if the error is fairly minor, or,
3. write to tutors. We shall adopt this path of action if the error is serious.

For students who suspect an error we suggest you contact either your tutor or Staff Tutor for verification or telephone Walton Hall – Milton Keynes 01908-652069, and speak to Margaret Crowe, the Course Manager for MST204.

If a CMA question seems to have no correct option or seems incorrect in some other way please mark the U box. We can pick this up when we get a sample print-out and zero-weight the question if necessary. However you should still pencil either an answer cell or the 'don't know' (?) cell.

2. Changes in Course Materials

The withdrawal of the computer terminals in 1991 from local study centres has meant that it is no longer possible for students to undertake practical computing work in Units 1, 2, 9, 10, 19, and 21 in the study weeks for those units. Time will be set aside during summer school for this work and it will subsequently be examined in a tutor marked assignment.

This means that **you should not study:**

Unit 1	Section 6
Unit 2	Section 6
Unit 9	Section 4
Unit 19	Section 5
Unit 21	Section 4

and ignore any other references to the computer packages RECREL, SIMLIN, LINPRO, NUMSOL and EIGSOL in the course texts.

The practical work at Summer School will be based on a specially written booklet and computer packages which will be distributed at the beginning of your summer school week.

If you have Summer School Excusal

For those of you who are unable to attend summer school, arrangements will be made to send you the software and booklet so that you can complete the assignment work in TMA06 if you have access to a Windows computer. Details will be sent to you once your summer school excusal has gone through. Please note that if you are unable to gain access to a computer you will be unable to answer four out of the six questions on TMA06 and so will need to apply the Substitution Rule to this assignment.

3. Modelling Work

Your modelling work is in two parts. The first part, which is based around the study of a Unit on Mathematical Modelling (Unit M), leads you to TMA04, and the second part, which is a more open ended modelling exercise, begins at Summer School and leads to TMA07. Should you be unable to go to Summer School then you will still be able to complete TMA07, although you will miss out on some valuable tuition.

4. Preparatory Unit and TMA01 Part I

Although a study week has been allocated for the Preparatory Unit (Unit P), our advice is to begin study of this material as soon as possible. A sound knowledge of the pre-requisite material contained in this unit will help you to concentrate on the new ideas introduced in the rest of the course.

There is a TMA question associated with the Preparatory Unit (Unit P). Our intention is for you to receive rapid feedback on this question so that you will be able to complete the rest of the TMA having already had comments on your work.

The cut-off-date for Part I of the assignment is on 5th February. This date is very early in the University year (MST204 is the first course to start) and although you *should* have heard by this point who your tutor is, it is by no means clear that you will have done.

Our advice to you is that you should do your assignment for the cut-off-date and if you have not heard who your tutor is by then continue with the course work and post your TMA Part I when you know to whom you should send it. **Do not send the assignment to your Regional Centre or contact them to ask to whom you should send your assignment.** Tutors have all been warned about the difficulty over this first cut-off-date and so should be understanding.

5. Television Programmes

The TV programmes for MST204 are no longer broadcast. They are now on cassettes and included as part of the course material.

6. Non-examinable material for 1998

The following parts of the course will be assessed in TMAs and CMAs but not in the examination.

Unit 3	Sections 3 and 4
Unit 18	Section 3
Unit 19	Sections 4.2 and 4.3
Unit 27	Section 4.3

7. Unit 5

Please check your copy of Unit 5 Complex Numbers. Some copies have been printed with page 59 (solutions to exercises) missing, and without the title page. If your copy is like this please write to Correspondence Services for a replacement copy.

8. Assessment

Be sure to read the section ASSESSMENT in the Course Guide.

TMAs. Please remember that TMAs often require more than a 20p or 26p stamp. Tutors are not very pleased when they have to pay excess postage.

HOW YOUR MARKS FOR A TMA WILL BE SHOWN ON THE PT3 FORM

Most TMA questions (apart from the Project TMAs) are marked out of 25. Your tutor will award you a total mark for each question, rounding up half marks. This will be entered in the appropriate grade box of the PT3 as two digits.

Your overall grade for the assignment is calculated by adding the marks for all the questions. This will be entered in the overall grade box of the PT3 form as a percentage. Full marks will be entered as HU.

The marks for the Modelling TMA, TMA 07, will be entered as a single percentage mark.

9. MST204 Handbook

Be sure to read the entry 'HANDBOOK' in the Course Guide.

N.B. Erratum Page 54 Section 2 part 1.

The modulus of elasticity k of a spring is defined by $K = \frac{k}{l_o}$ (not $k = \frac{K}{l_o}$)

The Handbook may be taken into the examination with any handwritten annotations you wish to add, but you are not allowed to add extra pages or use inserts or 'post-its'. It is obviously important to enter any errata in the Handbook before the examination.

10. Cassette Tapes

If you should have a faulty cassette, please write to Correspondence Services for a replacement, specifying which tape you need.

11. Note on T.V. Programme 1

The television programme "Modelling a Mortgage" was produced before the introduction of Mortgage Interest Relief at Source (MIRAS). The repayments discussed are the gross amount, before any income tax relief.

12. Getting help with the course

If you are in difficulties during the year you have many directions in which to turn for help: your course tutor, your counsellor, your fellow students, your regional Staff Tutor and the Telephone Tutorial and Record-a-call services.

Your tutor, if available should be the first contact for a course related query. If however you are unable to contact your tutor, then the following services may be of help.

Telephone Tutorial Service

Throughout the year, members of the Mathematics and Computing Faculty are available to answer questions about mathematics courses. Below is a list of names of people who have volunteered to answer questions about MST204 their telephone numbers and the times when they are usually available.

Feel free to use this service, but please note the following.

1. Your tutor, if available, should normally be the first contact for a course-related query. The telephone tutorial service is a back-up facility.
2. Please do not call outside the times listed, since the people involved will not then be expecting your call and may be engaged in other activities.

3. The people on the list undertake to be available normally at the times listed, but other commitments may make them unavailable on certain occasions.
4. Although TMA questions are not excluded as sources of queries, you should expect the amount of information provided in response to such a query to be limited, in fairness to other students. (TMAs should be substantially your own work, since the grades obtained on them count towards your overall course assessment.)

When you use the telephone tutorial service, please mention first that you are calling about MST204; the people may be answering questions about several courses. It is a good idea to have a pencil and paper handy, and any course material which may be relevant. A text reference is usually a helpful starting point.

Name	Day	Time	Tel Number
Mike Simpson	Any weekday	09.00–17.00	0171 794 0575
Mick Bromilow	Monday	19.00–21.00	01908 583761
John Trapp	Wednesday	19.00–22.00	01223 812120

The Course Manager

If your query is of a more general nature or concerns the administration of the course then contact the Course Manager. Address your comments or queries to:

Mrs Margaret Crowe
Course Manager MST204
Courses Office,
Faculty of Mathematics and Computing
Walton Hall,
Milton Keynes. MK7 6AA

or telephone her on Milton Keynes (01908) 652069.

Faculty Voicemail Service

A message recording system is available in the Faculty of Mathematics and Computing on 01908 653243. After a few rings you will either be able to speak with a member of staff or you will hear the following message:

“Hello, this is the Courses Office, Faculty of Mathematics and Computing. No-one is available to take your call at the moment. Please leave your name, telephone number, PI number together with your course code and we will get back to you. Thank you.”

You should then begin recording your message at the tone and just hang up when you have finished. (You can ignore the other instructions.)

Many messages received via this service are incomplete or unclear, so please speak clearly and slowly.

Useful telephone numbers

We have noticed recently that students have been calling the Faculty with queries which would be more easily answered in other areas of the University. This has been frustrating for us and, no doubt, irritating for you, particularly if you have been redirected several times before speaking to someone who can help you.

We thought it may be useful to gather together some telephone numbers from various areas of the University which you can keep for quick reference. Remember also that your Student Handbook does contain information about contacts within the University. Remember to have your PI number ready when you phone.

Any queries which involve direct questions about the content of the course should be addressed to the Course Manager for the course as follows: The Course Manager (MST204), Faculty of Mathematics and Computing, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA or telephone 01908 652069.

The Course Manager will also be able to deal with administrative queries but please try the numbers below first where your problem seems to involve one of the areas named. The telephone number and address of your Regional Centre is listed in Section 13.2 of your Student Handbook.

Nature of Query	Contact	Telephone No /Fax
<u>Registration problems</u>		
e.g. Change of Course What to do about materials received for a course already declined. Withdrawals	Registration and Fees Centre or Student Services Section in Regional Centre	Tel: 01908-65____ followed by the four digits relevant to the first letter of your surname B D R U V 8135 C G I P Q 8130 A E H L Y 8131 F M O W Z 8120 J K N S T X 8136 Fax: 01908-654914
Awards	Awards and Ceremonies Centre	Tel: 01908-653003
Credit Transfer queries	Credit Transfer Centre	Tel: 01908-653077 Fax: 01908-654918
<u>Fees</u>		
e.g. Fee queries; refunds	Registration and Fees Centre or Regional Centre	Tel: 01908-65____ followed by the four digits relevant to the first letter of your surname B D R U V 8135 C G I P Q 8130 A E H L Y 8131 F M O W Z 8120 J K N S T X 8136 Fax: 01908-654914
Queries about fee payment by instalments	OU Students Budget Account Office	Tel: 01908-655777 Fax: 01908-654903
<u>Mailings</u>		
Missing items in mailings or any queries about contents and timings of mailings	Milton Keynes Distribution Services. Ask for enquiries and have your PI number ready.	Tel: 01908-371016 Fax: 01908-365303

Assignments

TMA queries	Assignment Handling	Tel: 01908-654330
CMA queries/late submission	Assignment Records	Tel: 01908-653702 Fax: 01908-653744

Please note that TMA/CMA grades will not be discussed. Only queries about receipt of assignments etc. Possible errors or marks awarded/late submission of TMAs should be discussed with your Tutor in the first instance.

Regional Arrangements

Tutorial/Day Schools	Contact Student Services staff in your own Regional Centre
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Tutor Allocations	"
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Exam Centres and special arrangements	"
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Course choice and Degree/Diploma planning advice and Vocational Guidance.	"
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13. The M500 SOCIETY

If you are interested in mathematics, joining the M500 Society could be a way of alleviating the isolation of studying alone. It is a society for OU students, staff and friends, which through a magazine published several times a year, provides a forum for discussion, comment and argument, as well as fun!

The Society also publishes a directory of members who agree to be sources of help and advice on listed courses. It runs a popular weekend each September for examination preparation, for which members are entitled to discount, as well as a weekend in January for mathematical fun.

Subscription for 1998:	£10.00
Overseas please add:	£3.00

Enquiries: please send stamped A5 envelope for membership form and free magazine

Name:	Glenda Franklin
Position in society:	New Members Secretary
Address:	16 Warbank Close Alvechurch Birmingham B48 7PA

14. OUSA Faculty Products

OUSA (Services) Ltd continues to offer a wide range of faculty specific products. The range for the Faculty of Mathematics and Computing includes:

T-shirt	£8.00	Disk-shaped keyring	£2.10
Mug	£3.50	Clipboard folder	£5.30
Mouse mat	£4.30	Postcard	£0.30

Postage and packing £2.50

For an order form and full details of these products and other faculty ranges available, please telephone 01908 653693 or fax to 01908 654326 or write to:

OUSA (Services) Ltd,
PO Box 397,
Walton Hall,
Milton Keynes
MK7 6BE

15. The University Scale and Faculty of Mathematics and Computing Courses

Your assessment for this course will be marked on the University Scale. Below we quote the official description of this scale from the "Student Handbook".

Your performance in all assignments and examinations is recorded and reported back to you by means of the numerical University Scale:

Band	University Scale Score	Performance Standard
A	85–100	Pass 1
B	70–84	Pass 2
C	55–69	Pass 3
D	40–54	Pass 4
E	30–39	Bare Fail
F	15–29	Fail
G	0–14	Bad Fail

It has been our experience in the Faculty of Mathematics and Computing that students usually score better on continuous assessment than in the examination. A major reason for this is that the questions set in assignments on most Mathematics and Computing courses, can, in principle, be answered 100 per cent correctly using the information in the relevant course units. Of course, students rarely do answer all questions in an assignment correctly; but it is only to be expected that high scores will often be obtained and, in particular, higher scores than are usually obtained for courses in other faculties. We try to ensure that examination questions are not harder than continuous assessment questions, but, even so, it is quite a different matter to tackle similar questions under examination conditions.

You should bear in mind this discrepancy between examination and continuous assessment scores when trying to predict your final grade on the basis of your continuous assessment score. As a very rough guide, it may help you to know that the mean overall continuous assessment scores on Mathematics and Computing Faculty courses in 1996 (the latest year for which figures are available) ranged between 70.2 and 84.1 per cent, while the mean examination scores ranged between 55.8 and 67.9 per cent. We anticipate that similar differences will be obtained this year.

We should like to emphasise that there is no reason to be concerned about this discrepancy, which is anticipated by the Examination and Assessment Board for your course and taken into account in deciding your result status, as described in the "Student Handbook".